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ABSTRACT

Career education combines vocational, general, and college-preparatory education into a curriculum designed to provide educational experiences that will prepare an individual for economic independence, personal fulfillment, and an appreciation for the dignity of work. Career education will be integrated in the early school years, beginning with kindergarten and progressing through Grade 12. In the elementary years, the curriculum will relate reading, writing, and arithmetic to the ways adults earn a living, and during junior high school years, students will explore career opportunities in various occupational clusters. By senior high school, students will concentrate on one cluster, developing sufficient skill in a specific occupation to qualify for a job. Even though the students are preparing for a job upon graduation from high school, they will always retain the option of going on to higher education. (SB)

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Career Education*

By
Sidney P. Marland, Jr.
U.S. Commissioner of Education

Career education-- designed to prepare students for the attache case professions as well as lunch box occupations -- will receive its first trial in six United States public school districts this year.

American schools are producing too many youngsters who qualify neither for a job nor for college. Many high school graduates go on to college only because they haven't the vaguest idea of what else to do.

Career education is designed to give every youngster a genuine choice, as well as the intellectual and occupational skills necessary to back it up. Career education is not merely a substitute for "vocational education," or "general education," or "college preparatory education." Rather, it is a blending of all three into an entirely new curriculum. The fundamental concept of career education is that all educational experiences -- curriculum, instruction, and counseling -- should be geared to preparation for economic independence, personal fulfillment, and an appreciation for the dignity of work.

Career education will eliminate the artificial separation between things academic and things vocational. Three factors will distinguish career education from traditional vocational education: It will be offered as part of the curriculum of all students; it will permeate the entire spectrum of a youngster's education, from kindergarten through high school; and it will offer a much wider range of occupational choices than are now available in regular vocational education programs.

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*Before Thirty-third Session of the International Conference on Education, Geneva, Switzerland, September 15-23, 1971.

The concept will be tried out this year in selected public school districts in the States of Arizona, California, Colorado, Georgia, Michigan, and New Jersey. Assistance in the development of curriculum materials will be provided by Ohio State University's Center for Vocational and Technical Education.

If the six-district experiment succeeds, career education eventually will become a major component of the schooling provided some 80 percent of the Nation's students -- in contrast to the 25 percent currently enrolled in vocational-technical education programs.

Career education will begin as early as kindergarten through revised curriculums that relate reading, writing, and arithmetic to the varied ways by which adults earn a living.

As a youngster advances into junior high school, he will select three of 15 occupational "clusters" -- broad groupings of related occupations such as marine sciences, construction, fine arts, and health -- and begin exploring the nature of careers in each.

By senior high school, he will concentrate on one cluster, developing sufficient skill in a specific occupation to qualify for a job. All students will have an opportunity to enjoy actual work experience during their high school years through cooperative arrangements with business, industry, and public institutions and agencies. Yet each student's program will retain sufficient flexibility to enable him to switch to a related occupation later with a minimum of additional training. In addition, each student in a career education program will always retain the option of going on to higher education.

Thus, career education will demand no permanent bondage to a single career goal. Rather , it will reveal to students the great range of occupational options

open to them and help them develop positive attitudes toward work.

This "school-based" model of career education is one of three to be developed and tested under U.S. Office of Education sponsorship. The other three will be based on the home, involving extensive use of television instruction for adults and out-of-school youth; on employment in an industrial plant or office; and on special residential facilities such as boarding schools or camps where adults and teenagers would live temporarily for intensive career training.

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September 8, 1971